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The following documents have informed this guidance:

Special Educational needs and disability code of practice: 0-25 years

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

The National Curriculum

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-english-programmes-of-study>

The Equals

<http://equals.co.uk/equals-semi-formal-sld-curriculum/>

<http://equals.co.uk/holistic-music-for-children/>

This document forms part of our commitment to promoting emotional wellbeing and mental health. It has been reviewed and updated to be sure it:



- is consistent with our vision and strategy
- protects and promotes emotional wellbeing and mental health

The Woodlands Academy Curriculum provides a broad and balanced curriculum, underpinned by an in depth knowledge of each individual student, and how they learn.

Early Years

The curriculum incorporates the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and other experiences and opportunities which best meet the learning and developmental needs of the students in our school.

Organisation and approaches

The curriculum at Woodlands Academy is planned and organised to promote learning, personal growth and development. It includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but it is designed to develop the independence and responsibility of all our pupils.

Whilst we recognise some common challenges faced by children with specific SEN, we ensure that the individuality of each student is considered. There is a focus on recognising achievement and supporting progression based on an individual's strengths, interests, needs, and, where appropriate, choices. To ensure we can deliver a curriculum that is individualised we have developed a curriculum model that is flexible as well as being creative and innovative.

The students' EHCP provides us with long term outcomes which are their barriers to learning. These are then broken down to manageable sequential steps and are incorporated into the curriculum and the students termly 'Personalised Intention Map'. We use long term themes which allows us to focus on different areas of the curriculum as well as our in depth knowledge of the individual students and their interests. This approach ensures that we offer a varied, broad and balanced series of opportunities in which to achieve the objectives. It is a balance between providing students with opportunities to achieve their individualised targets whilst also ensuring they receive a balanced, varied and enriching curriculum.

Pathways and class groups

At Woodlands we offer three pathways for students semi formal (incl. early years) formal and a personalised pathway. These are based on the learning styles of our students and aim to meet the needs of each pupil by directly addressing their barriers to learning. These are not mutually exclusive, meaning that a student could be a formal learner and access the personalised pathway. Further detail on these pathways can be viewed below.

Semi - formal Curriculum

Our semi-formal students have a range of complex obstacles to learning and are working between levels P4 and end of year 1 expectations.

Intent

For all our semi-formal learners we provide a curriculum that reflects the needs of the whole child. The curriculum prepares our students for life after school as adults by offering a functional and personalised learning to enable them to make a positive contribution to their community. Promoting life skills and independence underpins the curriculum offer.

Our semi-formal students learn best when it is related to their own experience. The curriculum reflects this with the use of a thematic approach including functional English (My Communication) and functional Maths (My Thinking and Problem Solving). Curriculum coverage allows for concepts to be connected and reinforced through the use of a 'theme' with activities which are meaningful

and 'real life' allowing for a deeper experience. The curriculum also provides opportunities for creativity, physical well-being through P.E, Games, physiotherapy, swimming and Rebound Therapy.

Within the semi-formal team there are three classes, ranging from Early Years to KS4. One class' focus is 'Developing Communication and Independence' these are students who are predominantly KS3 -4 and require a curriculum which uses 'real life' situations to develop these skills. Within this class there are also some students who require a deeper personalised curriculum with a focus on developing their social communication and addressing their sensory processing difficulties.

The Intent of the semi-formal curriculum for students is to help them:

- Become effective communicators who can express themselves, their needs and build positive relationships.
- Become Independent individuals who with support can take part in school activities and in the community.
- Have a sense of self and make a positive contribution to the school and the Wider Community.
- Make good progress towards achieving their Key Milestones detailed in their EHCP and in all subject areas.
- Develop holistically with access to a range of therapeutic approaches.

Implementation

For our students with profound and complex needs the curriculum focuses on the early communication, social and emotional and cognitive skills that are the foundation to learning. It is a curriculum that recognises the importance of movement and play as a child's development and the needs for sensory and multi-sensory approaches to learning.

For our semi-formal student's curriculum areas, including 'My thinking and Problem Solving', 'Me and My Body', 'My World' and 'My Communication', 'My Creativity' are covered using a holistic approach.

All of our semi-formal students learn through structured play, functional activities and theme-based activities. Whilst discrete lessons are offered for English and Maths for some of our semi-formal students a 'themed', continuous provision is at the heart of the semi-formal curriculum. This allows students to engage with all areas and make progress in multiple learning intentions within the different themes.

The 'Developing Independence and Communication' class are our KS 3-4 students. The focus is to develop their communication and independence using real-life meaningful experience with an emphasis on the transference of skills and preparing them for adult life.

The semi-formal curriculum supports students to:

- Develop a sense of security through building positive relationships with staff.
- Develop an awareness of the World around them through sensory exploration.
- Develop the physical skills to enable them to control and explore the environment around them.
- Experience life within the school and wider community.
- Develop communication skills in speech, gesture, sign or symbols so that they can interact with others and make choices.
- Establish key concepts in English, Maths, Science and ICT.
- Learn the skills which will equip them to be more independent in adult life.
- Learn to cooperate with others, build positive relationships and take responsibility for their own actions.

As with all of our 'pathways' the semi-formal curriculum is based on the needs of the children and young people and as well as providing a framework for learning opportunities, also provide life skills opportunities. The students' EHCP provides us with long term outcomes and smaller 'Key Milestones' which are broken down to manageable sequential steps and are incorporated into the curriculum and the students termly 'Personalised Intention Map'. There is a breadth of learning as some of the students may stay within the same learning cohort, variation in experiences and learning within a theme ensures progression. Each student drives the direction of their own curriculum, whilst there are semi formal 'themes' the planning, delivery and learning will differ depending on the needs and abilities of the student. It is a balance between providing students with opportunities to achieve their individualised targets whilst also ensuring they receive a balanced, varied and enriching curriculum. Priorities based on Education, Health and Care Plan Outcomes (EHCP), broken down into Plans for learning targets, pupils' age, need, motivation and learning style will help build the curriculum.

Students in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are grouped according to need and learning style. They may also join different Primary based classes depending on their personalised curriculum access needs. They follow the statutory EYFS framework.

The semi-formal teaching team plan collaboratively which allows staff to share ideas, resources and reflect on their practice whilst also helping to reduce workloads. All staff aim to plan multi-sensory, engaging, purposeful, age appropriate and fun lessons.

Formal Curriculum

Intent

The formal curriculum recognises that students have a range of needs and requires access to specialist provision which is made available through a carefully planned curriculum, for example bespoke Social Communication sessions.

The **curriculum** is designed to provide adequate time for practice to embed the students' knowledge, understanding and skills. Planning ensures that communication, reading, writing numeracy and social skills are embedded throughout the curriculum. Our emphasis on 'learning through' other subject areas allows pupils to transfer skills, for example horticulture to transfer maths problem solving skills as well as working with others and developing independence. Staff teams identify students who might be falling behind and look at how any issues can be addressed e.g. use of an intervention, pastoral involvement etc.

Teaching and Learning for all students:

We will ensure that:

- our curriculum is engaging, challenging and motivating.
- activities are related to pupils' own experiences through a theme-based approach to support their sensory processing difficulties.
- This approach encourages learners to access prior knowledge to support their working memory difficulties.
- learners are provided with lots of new and engaging activities to generalise skills learnt and increase fluency.
- targets are addressed through a range of activities
- opportunities to develop pupils' independence are embedded throughout the curriculum.

- thinking skills and problem-solving are targeted throughout subject specific learning in English and Maths
- learners are provided with opportunities to embed new skills across a range of cross-curricular activities
- pupils are encouraged to be self-motivated in their learning.
- opportunities for peer scaffolding are created (by which peers model the problem-solving process then step back and offer support as needed).
- lessons often build upon pupils' previous learning and interests
- regular opportunities to review and reflect on learning are created
- there is a planned approach to educational visits to reinforce and stimulate learning
- In KS4 students will have the opportunity to undertake work related learning, including opportunities for work experience.

Lower Formal Curriculum Offer:

Students consistently working at the level of National Curriculum attainment targets for Year 1 and above access our 'formal curriculum' and receive an adaptation of the National Curriculum. The formal curriculum at Woodlands continues to emphasise communication, Personal and social development, problem solving and life skills, building upon the foundations of learning on which the semi-formal and personalised curriculum pathways are based.

Students following our lower formal curriculum access a range of National Curriculum subjects for their Key Stage (KS1/2 and KS2/3) this is then adapted and modified in the light of their developmental level and special educational needs. A three year cycle provides students with the opportunity to consolidate and enrich skills learnt within each subject and build on their knowledge and skills within each theme. This group of students are taught using subjects as a 'vehicle' for learning, using a 'thematic' approach. For example using the theme 'journeys' to incorporate all subjects allowing for the transference of knowledge and skills.

However, where a pupil is working within the National Curriculum attainment targets for a specific subject, they will access a formal pathway for that subject and or semi-formal pathway for other areas of the curriculum.

We build on previous learning in each key stage (both academic and self-help skills) so that each student becomes prepared for the transition to post 16 education and beyond. Our aim is that all our students become as independent as possible and acquire the tools and strategies needed to manage the challenges of life beyond Woodlands.

KS4 curriculum

In the KS4 curriculum the focus is on developing their independence skills in both their academic learning and their personal skills and to be recognised for these achievements through external qualifications and accreditation.

The Functional Skills Curriculum is covered in English and Maths and a qualification can be gained with Edexcel at Entry Level 1-3, Level 1 and Level 2. The curriculum focuses on application of skills to real life situations, and we encourage projects which enable pupils to use their skills in areas of personal interest.

All pupils also undertake the OCR Life and Living Skills qualification, which offers a range of 'bite-sized' units which learners can use to build flexible and relevant qualifications, geared to their individual interests and skills. This suite of Entry Level qualifications has been designed to encourage progression through its own structure. Pupils may progress to higher level units or achieve additional

units at the same level where progression to a higher level is not possible. Pupils may also progress to larger Life and Living Skills qualifications at Entry 1, Entry 2 or Entry 3.

In addition, pupils are given the opportunity to undertake a vocational catering qualification with Open Awards, at a level appropriate to them.

Implementation

At Woodlands we start by looking at each student's 'barrier to learning' as detailed in their Education Health Care Plans. We then 'hook' the curriculum around these identified barrier, which could include:

- Cognition – thinking and learning
- Communication difficulties – over half of our students have a diagnosis of Autism, so have difficulties communicating and socialising.
- Sensory Processing – some pupils have significant sensory integration difficulties. They may experience both hyper (over) and hypo (under) sensitivities throughout the day.
- Generalisation – difficulty transferring a skill across a range of contexts.
- Working Memory- Could hold fewer words, numbers and ideas at any one time and will find holding instructions difficult to recall.
- Problem Solving – acting upon understanding.
- Environmental – students may have family circumstances or expectations that impact negatively upon their learning.
- Social and emotional issues resulting in low confidence and self-esteem.
- Attendance - Some children's attendance is low which will impact on their learning.
- Medical needs – some students have significant medical needs which impacts on their ability to learn.

We are committed to ensuring that the curriculum is engaging, motivating and challenging. Students are provided with opportunities to embed new skills across a range of cross curricular subjects. Students are encouraged to be self-motivated in their learning. Peer scaffolding is an important strategy by which peers model the problem solving then step back and offer support as needed.

Our formal teaching spaces are laid out to support the range of needs within the environment. Visual structure to support the student's communication and working memory needs are used throughout. Many of the students need structure, routine and certainty in their learning, however opportunities that encourage them to think and problem solve as independently as possible are incorporated into their daily structure.

In order to implement the curriculum which is right for our student's staff knowledge and understanding is crucial. We strive to ensure that all staff have a full understanding of the teaching strategies needed to overcome barriers to learning. All staff need to have a full understanding of 'what' and 'how' they want students to learn through the implementation of a personalised approach planned with the use of rigorous assessment and evidence.

Throughout the formal curriculum there is a selection of reading scheme books, including Collins, ORT, Talisman and Project X. There can be many factors as to why a student might be on a particular reading book, including level of reading ability, comprehension skills, and interests. Due to the complex needs of some of our students they do not simply progress through one reading scheme in a sequential way. We have updated our reading scheme to include Bug Books which will allow for electronic access at home. Students use Nessy Reading which is accessed at home by many. Our approach to reading includes the wider world, environment and life skills. Using a cross curricular approach students are encouraged to explore a range of reading materials, including books, leaflets and I.T.

Personalised Learning Pathway

Intent

The SEND Code of practice emphasises the need to look beneath the outward behaviours and identify what is causing them whilst considering the child or young person's SEND, emotional wellbeing, social circumstances and mental health.

Some of our pupils require even more of an individualised and bespoke curriculum. Those pupils accessing our 'bespoke package' face many challenges in their lives, ranging from difficult home environments, trauma, and anxiety to more complex social, emotional and mental health needs as well as 'demand avoidant' profiles. As such this pathway does not focus on a specific need, rather it supports removing the barriers to an individual successfully achieving their outcomes.

Implementation

For those pupils who have 'demand avoidant' profiles or Pathological Demand Avoidance tendencies we offer a curriculum and pace of activity that fits with the students ability to engage at any given time which means a 'flexible curriculum' in collaboration with the student. The pathway consists of 3 Tiers (universal, targeted and specialist)

In order to reduce their anxiety which will help them to access the curriculum strategies include:

- Flexibility to allow for an overall decrease in demands.
- Allow control of their learning and social interactions as much as possible. Planning for these students requires 'pathways' depending on their level of anxiety at any one given time.
- A highly individualised personalised curriculum and teaching style which where possible embeds special interests and offers rewards in a subtle, spontaneous way.
- Activities which develops skills to manage emotional regulation
- Give some control over their physical learning environment.

The Thrive approach will be used for many of the pupils accessing the 'personalised learning' pathway. Thrive is based on recent advances in neuroscience, attachment theory and child development and draws on insights from these fields to provide a powerful way of working with children and young people that supports optimal social and emotional development. In addition, Thrive equips us to work in a targeted way with children and young people who may have struggled with difficult life events to help them re-engage with life and learning. Initial baseline assessment identifies areas of significant need and crucially provides suggested approaches for staff in school to consider.

Whole School Impact

Assessment, Feedback & Reflection

Teaching staff are expected to involve sharing learning goals with students and provide feedback, which leads to recognising their steps and how to take them.

Practical strategies to ensure pupils are involved in own progress include:

- 'Shout out' walls – way of displaying 'I can' statements
- Working walls - termly PLIM targets and if appropriate, ensuring students are aware of these targets.
- Personalised Learning Intention Maps – parents, pupils and teaching staff all involved in setting and monitoring holistic targets.
- Verbal feedback
- Keeping learning active and motivating

- Use of learning partners
- Plenary opportunities demonstrating how pupils have made progress in their work
- Reflective moments throughout a session to assess progress and how to move on.

The marking of students' work is an important factor in ensuring individuals' progress. Pupils should feel that teaching staff value their work in order to raise self-esteem and confidence. .

Summative and formative assessment is used to ensure that a student's progress and needs are reflected within their personalised learning.

The academy uses PIVATS and The Woodlands Subject trackers to assess our formal students. Baselines are carried out at the beginning of each academic year to ensure that we continue to be accurate regarding the starting points of all our students. Effective in-school summative assessment enables teaching staff to evaluate learning at the end of a unit or period and the impact of their own teaching, developing and refining where required. The Academy holds standardisation meetings across the year including internal and external moderations whereby staff and leadership are able to validate their judgement and the different assessments used.

In the semi-formal classes we measure outcome using the MAPP assessment tool. MAPP provides an opportunity to track the personalised learning intentions set and review them against The Continuum of Skill Development focusing on prompting, fluency, maintenance and generalisation.

The Levels of Engagement is an assessment tool used for some of our semi formal students who are not yet meeting Pre Key Stage Standard 1 in all areas (writing, reading and maths) and who were previously assessed at P Scale 1 – 4. Using the 5 areas of engagement: initiation, persistence, exploration, anticipation and realisation teachers are able to observe and assess the level of engagement for individual pupils. The model fits alongside and supports teachers to evaluate progress against Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) outcomes.

Formative Assessment is assessment for learning and focuses on improving teaching and learning for all students. This is an ongoing process, it helps to form the story of why the practitioners have made judgments based against EHCP and teacher assessments. This in turn helps to reflect personalised targets. Teaching staff identify how pupils are performing on a continuing basis and to use this information to provide appropriate support or extension, evaluate teaching and plan future lessons. We also ensure that our formal students gain an understanding of how well they are achieving towards their targets and how they can improve on this. Pupils have Personalised Learning Intention Maps (PLIMS) which are set termly and linked to their key milestones from their EHCP outcomes. Parents are kept informed about the achievement, progress and wider outcomes of their child across a period, through EHCP (Education Health Care Plans) and during parent evenings. Subject leaders track pupil progress and the impact of programs or approaches to learning. This in turn ensures that changes can be made to support or challenge pupils.

For further **subject specific curriculum information** and guidance please refer to the following policies/guidelines:

<p>English Policy Mathematics Policy Science Policy PE Policy ICT Policy Religious Education Policy PSHE Policy British Values & SMSC Policy Relationships & Sex Education Policy Humanities Policy Expressive Arts Policy Food Technology & Catering Policy</p>

Curriculum Enhancement

Independence and Life Skills

We see the development of independence and life skills as vital to our pupils. Whilst many of our pupils crave structure, routine and certainty in their learning, opportunities that encourage them to think and problem solve as independently as possible should be incorporated into their day.

We foster a “community inclusion” focus in the timetable that gives pupils the opportunity to be supported in the community to learn skills such as shopping and how to travel on public transport.

Sensory Programmes

Movement breaks are incorporated in the curriculum to allow for the optimal level of arousal and therefore maximum learning. These could include a range of alerting, organising and calming activities.

Other pupils who present with sensory regulation difficulties, which have an impact on their learning and behaviour, will require a ‘sensory diet’ with timetabled discrete sensory activities and support to encourage them to manage their own sensory needs e.g. toolkit.

Pupils who present with sensory regulation difficulties that have a significant impact on their daily life will require a sensory profile, a discrete sensory programme, a sensory toolkit and advice from an Occupational Therapist.

Enrichment

We offer a wide range of activities for all pupils from all year groups outside of the National Curriculum. Enrichment helps pupils to develop their interests and abilities, provides valuable learning experiences outside the classroom and promotes independence and positive relationships between pupils and with members of the local and wider community.

The curriculum is enriched by educational trips and visits, local community links and opportunities within the timetable to engage with new experiences such as Swimming, Camping, Horse Riding, Music Therapy, Rebound therapy, gymnastics, fitness sessions at the local gym and Educational Trips.

Many of our pupils participate in sporting activities across the County including tag rugby, football and netball.

Clubs take place for some of our pupils every Friday afternoon, incorporating interests such as Sports, Dance, Art and Film.